

# THE LION AND THE MOUSE BY CHARLES KLEIN AND ARTHUR HORNBLOW

## Shirley Astonishes Ryder By Acknowledging that His Son Sent the Private Letters from Judge Rossmore to the Millionaire

### CHAPTER XV—(Continued.)

"I MUST apologize for intruding at this unseemly hour, sir," said Stott, "but time is precious. The Senate meets tomorrow to vote. If anything is to be done for Judge Rossmore it must be done tonight."

"I fail to see why you address yourself to me in this matter, sir," replied Ryder with asperity.

"As Judge Rossmore's friend and counsel," answered Stott, "I am impelled to ask your help at this critical moment."

"The matter is in the hands of the United States Senate, sir," replied Ryder coldly.

"They are against him!" cried Stott; "not one Senator I've spoken to holds out any hope for him. If he is convicted it will mean his death. Inch by inch his life is leaving him. The only thing that can save him is the good news of the Senate's refusal to find him guilty."

Stott was talking so excitedly and loudly that neither he nor Ryder heard the low moan that came from the corner of the room where Shirley was standing listening.

"I can do nothing," repeated Ryder coldly, and he turned his back and began to examine some papers lying on his desk as if to notify the caller that the interview was ended. But Stott was not so easily discouraged. He went on:

"As I understand it, they will vote on strictly party lines, and the party in power is against him. He's a marked man. You have the power to help him." Heedless of Ryder's gesture of impatience he continued:

"When I left his bedside tonight, sir, I promised to return to him with good news; I have told him that the Senate ridicules the charges against him. I must return to him with good news. He is very ill tonight, sir."

He halted for a moment and glanced in Shirley's direction, and slightly raising his voice so she might hear, he added: "If he gets worse we shall send for his daughter."

"Where is his daughter?" demanded Ryder, suddenly interested.

"She is working in her father's interests," replied Stott, and, he added significantly, "I believe with some hope of success."

He gave Shirley a quick, questioning look. She nodded affirmatively. Ryder, who had seen nothing of this by-play, said with a sneer:

"Surely you didn't come here tonight to tell me this?"

"No, sir, I did not." He took from his pocket two letters—the two which Shirley had sent him, and held them out for Ryder's inspection. "These letters from Judge Rossmore to you," he said, "show you to be acquainted with the fact that he bought those shares as an investment—and did not receive them as a bribe."

When he caught sight of the letters and he realized what they were, Ryder changed color. Instinctively his eyes sought the drawer on the left-hand side of his desk. In a voice that was unnaturally calm, he asked:

"Why don't you produce them before the Senate?"

"It was too late," explained Stott, handing them to the financier. "I received them only two days ago. But if you come forward and declare—"

Ryder made an effort to control himself.

"I'll do nothing of the kind. I refuse to move in the matter. That is final. And now, sir," he added, raising his voice and pointing to the letters, "I wish to know how comes it that you had in your possession private correspondence addressed to me?"

"That I cannot answer," replied Stott promptly.

"From whom did you receive these letters?" demanded Ryder.

Stott was dumb, while Shirley clutched at her chair as if she would fall. The financier repeated the question.

"I must decline to answer," replied Stott finally.

Shirley left her place and came slowly forward. Addressing Ryder, she said:

"I wish to make a statement."

The financier gazed at her in astonishment. What could she know about it, he wondered, and he waited with curiosity to hear what she was going to say. But Stott instantly realized that she was about to take the blame upon herself, regardless of their cause. This must be prevented at all hazards, even if another must be sacrificed, so interrupting her he said hastily to Ryder:

"Judge Rossmore's life and honor are at stake and no false sense of delicacy must cause the failure of my object to save him. These letters were sent to me by your son."

"From my son?" exclaimed Ryder, staring. For a moment he staggered as if he had received a blow; he was too much overcome to speak or act. Then recovering himself, he rang a bell, and turned to Stott with renewed fury:

"So," he cried, "this man, this judge whose honor is at stake and his daughter, who most likely has no honor at stake, between them have made a thief and a liar of my son; false to his father, false to his party; and you, sir, have the presumption to come here and ask me to intercede for him?" To the butler, who entered, he said: "See if Mr. Jefferson is still in

the house. If he is, tell him I would like to see him here at once."

The man disappeared, and Ryder strode angrily up and down the room with the letters in his hand. Then, turning abruptly on Stott, he said:

"And now, sir, I think nothing more remains to be said. I shall keep these letters, as they are my property."

"As you please, Good night, sir."

"Good night," replied Ryder, not looking up.

With a significant glance at Shirley, who motioned to him that she might yet succeed where he had failed, Stott left the room. Ryder turned to Shirley. His fierceness of manner softened down as he addressed the girl.

"You see what they have done to my son—"

"Yes," replied Shirley, "it's the girl's fault. If Jefferson hadn't loved her you would have helped the judge. Ah, why did they ever meet! She has worked on his sympathy and he—he took these letters for her sake, not to injure you. Oh, you must make some allowance for him! One's sympathy gets aroused in spite of oneself; even I feel sorry for these people."

"Don't," replied Ryder grimly, "sympathy is often weakness. Ah, there you are!" turning to Jefferson, who entered the room at that moment.

"You sent for me, father?"

"Yes," said Ryder, sr., holding up the letters. "Have you ever seen these letters before?"

Jefferson took the letters and examined them, then he passed them back to his father and said frankly:

"Yes, I took them out of your desk and sent them to Mr. Stott in the hope they would help Judge Rossmore's case."

Ryder restrained himself from proceeding to actual violence only with the greatest difficulty. His face grew white as death, his lips were compressed, his hands twitched convulsively, his eyes flashed dangerously. He took another cigar to give the impression that he had himself well under control, but the violent trembling of his hands as he lit it betrayed the terrific strain he was under.

"So," he said, "you deliberately sacrificed my interests to save this woman's father—you hear him, Miss Green? Jefferson, my boy, I think it's time you and I had a final accounting."

Shirley made a motion as if about to withdraw. He stopped her with a gesture.

"Please don't go, Miss Green. As the writer of my biography you are sufficiently well acquainted with my family affairs to warrant your being present at the epilogue. Besides, I want an excuse for keeping my temper. Sit down, Miss Green."

Turning to Jefferson, he went on: "For your mother's sake, my boy, I have overlooked your little eccentricities of character. But now we have arrived at the parting of the ways—you have gone too far. The one aspect of this business I cannot overlook is your willingness to sell your own father for the sake of a woman."

"My own father," interrupted Jefferson bitterly, "would not hesitate to sell me if his business and political interests warranted the sacrifice!"

Shirley attempted the role of peacemaker. Appealing to the younger man, she said:

"Please don't talk like that, Mr. Jefferson." Then she turned to Ryder, sr.: "I don't think your son quite understands you, Mr. Ryder, and if you will pardon me, I don't think you quite understand him. Do you realize that there is a man's life at stake—Judge Rossmore is almost at the point of death and that favorable news from Senate tomorrow is perhaps the only thing that can save him?"

"Ah, I see," sneered Ryder, sr. "Judge Stott's story has aroused your sympathy."

"Yes, I—I confess my sympathy is aroused. I do feel for this father whose life is slowly ebbing away—whose strength is being sapped hourly by the thought of the disgrace—the injustice that is being done him! I do feel for the wife of this suffering man!"

"Ah, it's a complete picture!" cried Ryder mockingly. "The dying father, the sorrowing mother—and the daughter, what is she supposed to be doing?"

"She is fighting for her father's life," cried Shirley, "and you, Mr. Jefferson, should have pleaded—pleaded—not demanded. It's no use trying to combat your father's will."

"She is quite right, father. I should have implored you. I do so now. I ask you, for God's sake, to help us!"

Ryder was grim and silent. He rose from his seat and paced the room, puffing savagely at his cigar. Then he turned and said:

"His removal is a political necessity. If he goes back on the bench every paltry justice of the peace, every petty official will think he has a special mission to tear down the structure that hard work and capital have erected. No, this man has been especially conspicuous in his efforts to block the progress of amalgamated interests."

"And so he must be sacrificed!" cried Shirley indignantly.

"He is a meddlesome man," insisted Ryder, "and—"

"He is innocent of the charges brought against him," urged Jefferson.

"Mr. Ryder is not considering that point," said Shirley bitterly. "All he

can see is that it is necessary to put this poor old man in the public pillory, to set him up as a warning to others of his class not to act in accordance with the principles of truth and justice—not to dare to obstruct the car of Juggernaut set in motion by the money gods of the country!"

"It's the survival of the fittest, my dear," said Ryder coldly.

"Oh!" cried Shirley, making a last appeal to the financier's heart of stone, "use your great influence with this governing body for good, not evil! Urge them to vote not in accordance with party policy and personal interest, but in accordance with their consciences—in accordance with truth and justice! Ah, for God's sake, Mr. Ryder! don't permit this foul injustice to blot the name of the highest tribunal in the Western world!"

Ryder laughed cynically.

"By Jove! Jefferson, I give you credit for having secured an eloquent advocate!"

"Suppose," went on Shirley, ignoring his taunting comments, "suppose this daughter promises that she will never—never see your son again—that she will go away to some foreign country?"

"Not!" burst in Jefferson, "why should she? If my father is not man enough to do a simple act of justice—without bartering a woman's happiness and his son's happiness, let him find comfort in his self-justification!"

"You?" "You?" he stammered. "Yes, yes, I am the Rossmore woman! Listen, Mr. Ryder. Don't turn away from me. Go to Washington on behalf of my father, and I promise you I will never see your son again—never, never!"

"Ah, Shirley!" cried Jefferson, "you don't love me!"

"Yes, Jeff, I do; God knows I do! But if I must break my own heart to save my father I will do it."

"Would you sacrifice my happiness and your own?"

line, faced the two men, pale and determined. The time had come to reveal the truth. The masquerade could go on no longer. It was not honorable either to her father or to herself. Her self-respect demanded that she inform the financier of her true identity.

"I cannot marry your son with these lies upon my lips!" she cried. "I cannot go on with this deception. I told you you did not know who I was, who my people were. My story about them, my name, everything about me is false, every word I have uttered is a lie, a fraud, a cheat! I would not tell you now, but you trusted me and are willing to intrust your son's future, your family honor in my keeping, and I can't keep back the truth from you. Mr. Ryder, I am the daughter of the man you hate. I am the woman your son loves. I am Shirley Rossmore!"

Ryder took his cigar from his lips and rose slowly to his feet.

"You?" "You?" he stammered. "Yes, yes, I am the Rossmore woman! Listen, Mr. Ryder. Don't turn away from me. Go to Washington on behalf of my father, and I promise you I will never see your son again—never, never!"

"Ah, Shirley!" cried Jefferson, "you don't love me!"

"Yes, Jeff, I do; God knows I do! But if I must break my own heart to save my father I will do it."

"Would you sacrifice my happiness and your own?"

She raised her voice, and as she stood there denouncing the man of money, her flashing eyes and her head thrown back, she looked like some avenging angel defying one of the powers of Evil.

"Leave the room!" shouted Ryder, beside himself, and pointing to the door.

"Father!" cried Jefferson, starting forward to protect the girl he loved.

"You have tricked him as you have me!" thundered Ryder.

"It is your own vanity that has tricked you!" cried Shirley contemptuously. "You lay traps for yourself and walk into them. You compel everyone around you to lie to you, to cajole you, to praise you, to deceive you! At least, you cannot accuse me of flattering you. I have never fawned upon you as you compel your family and your friends and your dependents to do. I have always appealed to your better nature by telling you the truth, and in your heart you know that I am speaking the truth now."

"Go!" he commanded.

"No, Jeff, I came here alone and I'm going alone!"

"You are not. I shall go with you. I intend to make you my wife!"

Ryder laughed scornfully.

"No," cried Shirley, "do you think I'll marry a man whose father is as deep a discreditor to the human race as

things packed. No, she would stay under this hated roof until morning and then take the first train to Washington. There was still a chance that the vote might be delayed, in which case she might yet succeed in winning over some of the Senators. She began to gather her things together and was thus engaged when she heard a knock at the door.

"Who's there?" she called out.

"It's I," replied a familiar voice. Shirley went to the door and, open-

ing it, found Jefferson on the threshold. He made no attempt to enter, nor did she invite him in. He looked tired and careworn.

"Good-night," he said, "not going to bed?"

"No, Jeff, I'm not going to bed tonight. It's a little too late. I did not realize it. Tomorrow morning, early."

He seemed reassured and held out his hand.

"Good-night, dearest—you're a brave girl. You made a splendid fight."

"It didn't do much good," she replied in a disheartened, listless way.

"But it set him thinking," rejoined Jefferson. "No one ever spoke to my father like that before. It did him good. He's still marching up and down the library, chewing the cud—"

Noticing Shirley's tired face and her eyes, with great black circles underneath, he stopped short.

"Now don't do any more packing to-night," he said. "Go to bed and in the morning I'll come up and help you. Good night!"

"Good night, Jeff," she smiled.

He went downstairs, and after doing some more packing she went to bed. But it was hours before she got to sleep, and then she dreamed that she saw Ryder suddenly rise and denounce himself before the astonished Senators as a perjurer and traitor to his country, while she returned to Massapequa with the glad news that her father was acquitted.

Meantime, a solitary figure remained in the library, pacing to and fro like a lost soul in Purgatory. Mrs. Ryder had returned from the play and gone to bed, serenely oblivious of the drama in real life that had been enacted at home, the servants locked the house up for the night and still John Burkett Ryder, walked the floor of his sanctum, and late into the small hours of the morning the watchman going his lonely rounds, saw a light in the library and the restless figure of his employer sharply silhouetted against the white blinds.

For the first time in his life John Ryder realized that there was some-

thing in the world beyond self. He had seen with his own eyes the sacrifice a daughter will make for the father she loves, and he asked himself what manner of a man that father could be to inspire such devotion in his child. He probed into his own heart and conscience and reviewed his past career. He had been phenomenally successful, but he had not been happy. He had more money than he knew what to do with, but the pleasures of the domestic circle, which he saw other men enjoy, had been denied to him. Was he himself to blame? Had his insatiable craving for gold and power led him to neglect those other things in life which contribute more truly to man's happiness? In other words, was his life a mistake? Yes, it was true what this girl charged, he had been merciless and unscrupulous in his dealings with his fellow man. It was true that hardly a dollar of his vast fortune had been honestly earned. It was true that it had been wrung from the people by fraud and trickery. He had craved for power, yet now he had tasted it, what a hollow joy it was, after all! The public hated and despised him; even his so-called friends and business associates loathed him merely because they feared him. And this judge—this father he had persecuted and ruined, what a better man and citizen he was, now much more worthy of a child's love and of the esteem of the world! What had Judge Rossmore done, after all, to deserve the trifling punishment the amalgamated interests had caused him to suffer? If he had blocked their game, he had done only what his oath, his duty commanded him to do. Such a girl as Shirley Rossmore could not have had any other kind of a father. Ah, if he had had such a daughter he might have been a better man, if only to win his child's respect and affection. John Ryder pondered long and deeply and the more he ruminated, the stronger the conviction grew upon him that the girl was right and he was wrong. Suddenly, he looked at his watch. It was one o'clock. Roberts had told him that it would be an all night session and that a vote would probably not be taken until very late. He unhooked the telephone and calling "central," asked for "long distance" and connection with Washington.

It was seven o'clock when the maid entered Shirley's room with her breakfast and she found its occupant up and dressed.

"Why you haven't been to bed, Miss!" exclaimed the girl, looking at the bed in the inner room which seemed scarcely disturbed.

"No, Theresa—I-I couldn't sleep. Hastily pouring out a cup of tea she added, 'I must catch that nine o'clock train to Washington. I didn't finish packing until nearly three.'"

"Can I do anything for you, Miss?" inquired the maid. Shirley was as popular with the servants as with the rest of the household.

"No," answered Shirley, "there are only a few things to go in my suit case. Will you please have a cab here in half an hour?"

The maid was about to go when she suddenly thought of something she had forgotten. She held out an envelope which she had left lying on the tray.

"Oh, Miss, Mr. Jorkins said to give you this and master wanted to see you as soon as you had finished your breakfast."

Shirley tore open the envelope and took out the contents. It was a check, payable to her order for \$5,000 and signed "John Burkett Ryder."

A deep flush covered the girl's face as she saw the money—A flush of annoyance, rather than of pleasure. This man who had insulted her, who had wronged her father, who had driven her from his home, thought he could throw his gold at her and insolently send her her pay as one settles haughtily with a servant discharged for impudence. She would have none of his money—the work she had done she would make him a present of. She replaced the check in the envelope and passed it back to Theresa.

"Give this to Mr. Ryder and tell him I cannot see him."

"But Mr. Ryder said—" insisted the girl.

"Please deliver my message as I give it," commanded Shirley with authority. "I cannot see Mr. Ryder."

The maid withdrew, but she had barely closed the door when it was opened again and Mrs. Ryder rushed in, without knocking. She was all fluttered with excitement and in such a hurry that she had not even stopped to arrange her toilet.

"My dear Miss Green," she gasped, "what's this I hear—going away suddenly without giving me warning?"

"I wasn't engaged by the month," replied Shirley dryly.

"I know, dear, I know. I was thinking of myself. I've grown so used to you—how shall I get on without you—no one understands me the way you do. Dear me! The whole house is upset. Mr. Ryder never went to bed at all last night. Jefferson is going away, too—forever, he threatens. If he hadn't come, and woke me up to say good-by, I should never have known you intended to leave us. My boy's going—you're going—everyone's deserting me!"

Mrs. Ryder was not accustomed to such prolonged flights of oratory and she sank exhausted on a chair, her eyes filling with tears.

(To Be Continued Next Sunday.)



Shirley Left Her Place and Came Slowly Forward. Addressing Ryder, She Said: "I Wish to Make a Statement."

Shirley, completely unnerved, made a move toward the door, unable longer to bear the strain she was under. She tottered as though she would fall. Ryder made a quick movement toward his son and took him by the arm. Pointing to Shirley he said in a low tone:

"You see how that girl pleads your cause for you! She loves you, my boy!" Jefferson started. "Yes, she does," pursued Ryder, sr. "She's worth a thousand of the Rossmore woman. Make her your wife, and I'll—"

"Make her my wife!" cried Jefferson, joyously. He stared at his parent as if he thought he had suddenly been bereft of his senses.

"Make her my wife?" he repeated incredulously.

"Well, what do you say?" demanded Ryder, sr.

The young man advanced toward Shirley, hands outstretched.

"Yes, yes, Shir—Miss Green, will you? Seeing that Shirley made no sign, he said: "Not now, father; I will speak to her later."

"No, no, tonight, at once!" insisted Ryder. Addressing Shirley, he went on: "Miss Green, my son is much affected by your disinterested appeal in his behalf. He—he can save him from himself—my son wishes you—he asks you to become his wife! Is it not so, Jefferson?"

"Yes, yes, my wife!" advancing again toward Shirley.

The girl shrank back in alarm.

"No, no, no, Mr. Ryder, I cannot, I cannot!" she cried.

"Why not?" demanded Ryder, sr., appealingly. "Ah, don't decide hastily—"

Shirley, her face set and drawn and keen mental distress showing in every

"No happiness can be built on lies. Jeff, we must build on truth or our whole house will crumble and fall. We have deceived your father, but he will forgive that, won't you?" she said, appealing to Ryder, "and you will go to Washington, you will save my father's honor, his life, you will—"

They stood face to face—this slim, delicate girl battling for her father's life, arrayed against a cold-blooded, heartless, unscrupulous man, deaf to every impulse of human sympathy or pity. Since this woman had deceived him, fooled him, he would deal with her as with everyone who crossed his will. She laid her hand on his arm, pleading with him. Brutally, savagely, he thrust her aside.

"No, no, I will not!" he thundered.

"You have wormed yourself into my confidence by means of lies and deceit. You have tricked me, fooled me to the very limit! Oh, how easy to see how you have beguiled my son into the folly of loving you! And you—you have the brazen effrontery to ask me to plead for your father? No! No! Let the law take its course; and now, Miss Rossmore—you will please leave my house tomorrow morning!"

Shirley stood listening to what he had to say, her face white, her mouth quivering. At last the crisis had come. It was a fight to the finish between this man, the incarnation of corporate greed, and herself, representing the fundamental principles of right and justice. She turned on him in a fury:

"Yes, I will leave your house to-night! Do you think I would remain another hour beneath the roof of a man who is as blind to justice, as deaf to mercy, as incapable of human sympathy as you are!"

### CHAPTER XVI.

When Shirley reached her rooms she broke down completely, she threw herself upon a sofa and burst into a fit of violent sobbing. After all, she was only a woman, and the ordeal through which she had passed would have taxed the strongest powers of endurance. She had borne up courageously while there remained the faintest chance that she might succeed in moving the financier to pity, but now that all hopes in that direction were shattered, and she herself had been ordered harshly from the house like an ordinary malefactor, the reaction set in, and she gave way freely to her long pent-up anguish and distress. Nothing now could save her father—not even this journey to Washington, tired, and she determined to take, nevertheless, for, according to what Stott had said, the Senate was to take a vote that very night.

She looked at the time—11 o'clock. She had told Mr. Ryder that she would leave his house at once, but on reflection it was impossible for a girl alone to seek a room at that hour. It would be midnight before she could get her

## She Makes a Final Appeal to the Financier to Save Her Father and Confesses She Is Rossmore's Daughter

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